

ULTRA-TRAIL

AUSTRALIA

UTA951 Race Report – Abigail Tyson (age 11)

I love to run and so does Mum and my Brother, so along with my Dad we came to the Blue Mountains to watch Mum participate in the UTAPace22. We originally came to cheer on mum doing the recently added UTAPace22 but on arriving grasped that kids could partake in the Injinji 1km run and - also the recently added - UTA951. Upon arriving we settled down into our living space for the Thursday night and prepared for Mum's run on the Friday.

2 days after we arrived we signed up for the UTA951, collected our race numbers and headed off to catch the Scenic World Train to the beginning of the race (at the time I had no idea that the race would have a winner). Once there we proceeded to split the 6 people doing the run into 2 groups of 3 and started a minute apart. I was with my friend, Paula and Yasmin, her mum and we went first (as we were supposedly faster than the others). The starter told us to start and we were off!

Running up the stairs was much harder than I had originally expected and I could only imagine what the 100km and even the 50km and 22km runners had to go through (up and down the Furber Steps with the addition of the Giant Staircase for 100km). At only 100 steps I was already feeling the strain and continuously thought about the fact that I had more than 9 times what I had just done.

At first Paula and Yasmin were both behind me but gradually Yasmin dropped back to where my brother caught up with her. Paula and I continued our way up the stairs both acquiring stitches about 420 stairs up. We sustained a constant switching of positions all the way up before reaching my mum (after doing the 22km the day before) standing with the photographer and her friend who had done the 100km in the past.

Mum hadn't got her camera ready, as she wasn't expecting us so soon so she shouted at us to slow down before realising what she was saying and then shouting at us to RUN! SPRINT! FASTER! Madly we dashed as fast as we could, puffing and panting to the finish line me overtaking Paula and beating her with 1 second to spare. After our 15.29-minute trek up to the end we sat and helped ourselves to the lollies, chips and water supplied. A few minutes later my brother arrived (only 1 second after me as we started a minute apart) followed by Yasmin and my Dad, next only a few seconds later Gina, Paula's sister, came sprinting down the final leg of the track.

After a quick photo shoot we left back to our accommodation. The next day we came back for the final presentation and I was excited to find out that for the UTA951 I had placed 1st at a time of 15.29 minutes. As a prize I received a jumper (that was way to big), a head torch (which I gave to Paula as I beat her by only a second), Fisiocrem and another pair of Injinji socks. Running up stairs was a challenge for me as although I have run 8 km before and was placed in my age group at a time of 53.18 minutes and it was on a flat road.

